

PRESS RELEASE

Event: **Canción Criolla – encounters in AfroPeru**
A salon featuring photos and music of AfroPeru.

Photographer: **Jesi Kelley**

Date: **November 6, 2010**

Time: **7:30 – 11PM**

Location: **The ROC – 93 St. Mark’s Place, NYC (212-982-9896)**
IRT #6 Train to Astor Place or N, R Trains to 8th Street, walk east.

Admission: **\$12 in advance / \$15 at the door via paypal to thebear.maiden@gmail.com.**
After 10/18 at www.jesikelley.com/events

CONTACT: **Jesi Kelley, jesi@jesikelley.com, (917) 294-4762**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Columbus Day 2010, New York, New York - Jesi Kelley began

taking pictures at 13. The daughter of prominent African

American novelist and short-story writer William Melvin Kelley

and visual artist Aiki, she grew up an artist’s kid. “My earliest

memories are of the smell of linseed oil, the sound of my father’s

two-fingered pecking on an ancient portable typewriter, and several hungry artists descending on our Paris apartment every evening at dinner time.” But the artist’s life can be a poor life, and Ms. Kelley rebelled by seeking corporate jobs in the media and financial industries, aspiring to Brooks Brothers suits and matching scarves.

However, she shared her father’s interest in photography. Inspired by and emulating the work of Henri Cartier Bresson (who took her picture with her father in 1963), Sally Mann and Weegee, her work seeks to tell the inner stories people wear on their bodies. A month before 9/11, she quit her last corporate job as a computer network manager, and followed in the family business. She was accepted to Brooklyn’s Pratt Institute as a 39-year old student, graduating with a degree in graphic design and illustration.

Through her mother, she is a descendant of the Nottoway, Cherokee and Seminole Nations and has a particular love for and focus on Native American Pow Wows, particularly in the New York Area. In 2008 she

and Aiki mounted “*Blendians: Images from the Pow Wow Trail*”, a well-received exhibition featuring photos and art inspired by the pow wow.

This summer Ms. Kelley was privileged to serve as the photo documenter for the *Speaking In Rhythms Percussion Ensemble*, a group of young percussionists aged 9 to 17 as they traveled to Lima, Peru to learn about the rhythms of Africa that had come to Peru via slavery. Ex-slaves had settled in Chincha Alta, Peru and using the Cajon (a box drum) they kept the traditional rhythms and dances of Africa alive. Eleven members of the Ensemble (including Ms. Kelley’s son) made the trip along with the group’s founder and CEO **DeVeor Rainey** and Afroperuano percussionist **Marcos Napa** (formerly of *Peru Negro*, an Afroperuano dance and percussion group).

“As a woman of tri-racial heritage,” Ms. Kelley says, “Peru fascinated me. All the same elements as in North America were there--the Indio, the Euro and the African--but with very different results.” During the 11 day trip, Ms. Kelley took 1,763 photographs of people, places and things, mostly in the districts of Barranco and Miraflores in Lima. But one memorable day was spent in the town of Carmen in Chincha Alta, during the Festival of the Virgen of Carmen.

The salon-styled event will feature Ms. Kelley’s photos as unmounted 11x17 posters; signed by the artist, they will be for sale. **Marcos Napa** and members of his group **Caracumbe** will perform. Peruvian dance troupe **Mosaicos del Peru** will also be featured. A jam session for cajón drummers will immediately follow.

A by-invitation-only reception begins at 6P, doors open to the public at 7:30 with performances beginning at 8:30P. Tickets (\$12 in advance/ \$15 at the door) go on sale at www.jesikelley.com/events on October 18, or via paypal to thebear.maiden@gmail.com.

For more information, contact jesi@jesikelley.com

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The Speaking in Rhythms Percussion Ensemble

Founded in 2001 by Executive Director DeVeor Rainey, Speaking in Rhythms Inc. is an organization that provides a comprehensive music program for youth in East Harlem. Established initially as an after-school program at CPE II, a small progressive elementary school in East Harlem where Ms. Rainey has taught music for eight years, Ms. Rainey chose to base her music program on percussion instruments because she believes that their variety and versatility, and the relative ease with which they can be learned, provide a wonderful way for students to explore in a group such musical concepts as rhythm, melody and harmony. Through the use of percussion instruments, it exposes children to the musical styles and genres of different cultures, instructs them not only in percussion technique but in music theory and composition, and affords them opportunities to perform their own compositions and arrangements for the community. The organization strives to give its members the knowledge and discipline they need to fully realize their creativity, and to enhance their sense of their own cultural identity in the context of a wider world. Ms. Rainey has a B. A. from The City College of New York and an M.A. in Music Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. Visit www.speakinginrhythms.org.

The ROC –

Conveniently located in the East Village, The ROC provides SPACE for people with a vision. Need a place to hold a class, share music, take pictures - The ROC is your place! The ROC also offers activities for children and families.

Contact Melle at 93 St Marks Place, New York, NY, (212)-982-9896 or www.therocspace.com